

***4th Annual KY Construction Career Days
October 1-2, 2008
Shelby County Fairgrounds***



The fourth annual Kentucky Construction Career Days was another shining example of what happens when industry professionals work together to increase the awareness of the wide variety of careers available in the construction industry. The event is sponsored by Kentucky Construction Career Choice Council.

According to it's website (<http://www.k4c.org/>), “The purposes of the Kentucky Construction Career Choice Council (K4C) are to promote the construction industry, recruit individuals to refine their career potential in construction, and provide financial assistance to encourage and sustain workforce development.”

Office of Career and Technical Education (OCTE) academic consultant Tommy Sutton relayed that this year's event played host to approximately 2,050 students from 43 schools; including one from Indiana, 22 Kentucky Tech area technology centers, four locally operated career and technical centers, nine high schools, four Youth Development Centers, two Kentucky Community and Technical Colleges, and a group from Job Corp. All in all, the event was considered a success because it provided students with an opportunity to talk with exhibitors about careers. However, students had the most fun taking part in hands-on activities like operating an excavator or backhoe, using hand tools, building projects, welding, handling equipment, and competing in the Kentucky Army National Guard obstacle course – just to name a few.



For more information about Kentucky Construction Career Choice Council please contact [Juva Barber](#) at (502) 875-5478.



***At left: Caldwell Co. ATC students nail together their wooden tool kit.
Below: OCTE executive director John Marks and Juva Barber.***

Juva Barber, government affairs director for the Home Builders Association of Kentucky and a member of the K4C, was once again involved in the coordination of this year's event.

A total of 1,800 "wooden tool kits" were ordered for students to assemble. The "hands-on" activity was provided as a special tribute in the memory of Murray Riffie, a K4C member who worked tirelessly to initiate the original Construction Career Days event.





Tim Parsons of Parsons Electric, Inc. has been part of the KY Construction Career Days since it first began in 2005. His wife Christine is a member of the K4C board responsible for the event.

“The whole idea of holding this type of event is to expose high school students to the many rewarding and diverse careers in the industry,” said Parsons.

Photo (l to r): Parsons, Joe Fister, Hughes Jones-Harrodsburg ATC electrical technology instructor; and electrical technology students Seth Beasley and Zach Overall. Both students agreed the event was a good learning experience.

“Our students look forward to this field trip because they know it will be fun and they are exposed to individuals that can help them get a job,” says Fister.

The Associated General Contractors (AGC) of Kentucky is a “Patron Sponsor” of the K4C Construction Career Days.

**Richard Vincent
AGC Executive VP:**

“Instructors tell me that the best day in class all year is the day after this construction career fair.

“We at AGC believe this type of comment summarizes why we are involved each year. It also says volumes about the impact of the event.

“The efforts of K4C members provide students with an opportunity to personally experience the many avenues of careers the industry has to offer. We have united to demonstrate the value, need and technical skills required to compete in our industries.”



Photo (l to r): Richard Vincent, AGC executive vice president; Brent Tingle, Austin Crowe (students in the Shelby Co. HS construction program); and John McKibben, AGC membership director.

**John Marks,
OCTE Executive Director:**

“The OCTE is supportive of the K4C and the mission they have undertaken to organize the annual Construction Career Days event.

“The collaboration among KHBA, AGC, Trade Unions, ABC and all the other K4C members to carry out an operation of this magnitude demonstrates the value they place on providing an opportunity for students to understand the many career fields the construction industry can offer.

“Of the 43 schools that elected to attend the event, we know students from carpentry, electricity, HVAC, welding, and construction programs were exposed to industry professionals, postsecondary instructors from KCTCS, heavy equipment, hand tools and a variety of vendors. We believe this is an indication of the importance teachers place on the learning environment their students experience on this field trip. We also know our instructors make valuable industry contacts.

“We support and value that students are exposed to variety of career choices and can actually talk with representatives to make informed choices on what the possibilities are for their respective futures.”



Photo (l to r): John Marks, OCTE executive director; Ohio Co. ATC Instructors Tim Hall, electrical technology and Marty Cruz, carpentry; and Steve Bennett, OCTE branch supervisor.

**Steve Phillippi,
Kentucky SkillsUSA State Director:**

“Kentucky Construction Career Days is one of the most valuable venues for construction students enrolled in career and technical education programs. It is a showcase for students to develop a deeper understanding of construction trades and the occupations available for them after graduation.

“SkillsUSA Kentucky was pleased to support this endeavor by having an information booth on site. A large portion of SkillsUSA Kentucky’s success is because of our industrial partners. They are the true leaders and models for our membership. They are the individuals at the grassroots level who provide the positive motivation for students to continue their career and technical education programs. They set standards for our students to follow. They encourage our membership to move closer to our association’s mission, “To help SkillsUSA members become world-class workers and responsible citizens.”

“I can not say enough for our construction partners. They are assisting career and technical education in delivering a new generation of skilled and motivated leaders for Kentucky’s future.”



Photo (l to r): Emily Wash, SkillsUSA administrative assistant; and state director Steve Phillippi set up a booth to provide students with an opportunity to learn more about the student organization.

***Students registered to win a SkillsUSA tool box.
Winners over the two-day event were:
Lonnie Riddell, Shelby County ATC
Cory Pryor, Madison County ATC***



Photo (l to r): Brian Keith, human resources director of Koetter talks with Randall Walls, Garrard Co. ATC carpentry student under the direction of instructor Mike Oakley.

Keith:

“It’s important to teach young adults the quality jobs that exist in the construction industry.”

Below: Kentucky Association of Highway Contractors, Inc. has been an exhibitor since the inception of the career days event. Chad LaRue (left back) and Charles Lovern (middle right) give Eddie Durr, Hughes Jones Harrodsburg ATC carpentry instructor and his students an overview of what highway contractors do for a living.

“This type of an event is important because it allows us to speak directly with students,” said LaRue. “It’s important to make kids aware of the job opportunities in the highway construction industry.”





Photo (l to r): Lincoln Electric technical representative Ed Varekojis takes a moment to speak with Breckinridge County ATC welding instructor Chris Basham and one of his students.

"My students have enjoyed participating in this construction career day program," says Basham. "It has provided them with an opportunity to see what's in store for them upon graduation from high school. The time we have spent here has been extremely valuable for them because they now have a better understanding of salary ranges they can make in the real world."

"Lincoln Electric understands the need to target today's youth because of the serious shortage of skilled arc welders in KY and all over the U.S.," said Varekojis. "This type of event allows all of us to positively promote skilled careers to those who will make up our future workforce."

Below (l to r): Chris Sanford and Travis Sloan, Shelby Co. HS construction technology students try their hand at working with decorative concrete. Both are students of Mr. Walt Wilson.

“This is the future workforce,” said Brian Happell, Irving Materials Inc. representative. “So, if we can influence them into a career that is both enjoyable and profitable, I consider that a success.”



At right: Deborah Besser, Eastern Kentucky University Department of Technology assistant professor, discusses options for pursuing a postsecondary education degree in construction management.



Above (l to r): Titan HR Recruiter Dave Tames provides some information to Sam Mitchell, a welding student at the Caldwell Co. ATC.



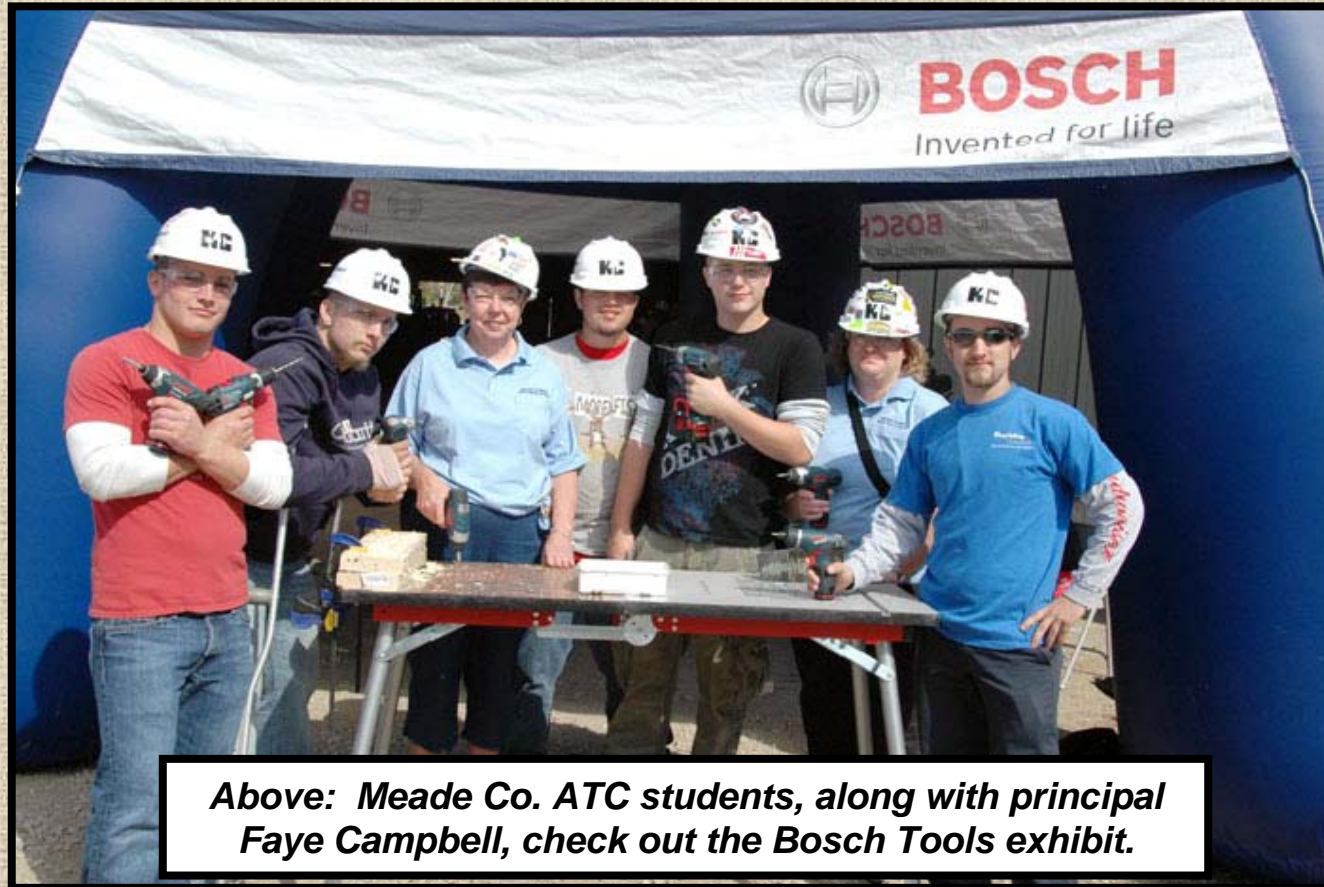
Faye Campbell
Meade Co. ATC Principal:

“The Construction Fair was a great opportunity for our students to have fun, get away from school for a day, meet new people, and LEARN. It was the perfect combination adding up to education.

“The students enjoyed working with some new tools, operating heavy equipment, showing off some of their skills, talking with professionals, and collecting ‘freebies.’

“One of our parent chaperones, who incidentally owns his own construction company, commented that it was a great day and a positive educational experience.

“Our thanks go out to everyone who worked so hard to coordinate and organize such a wonderful exposition of trades and tools in the construction industry. My faculty, staff and students thank all those who participated as vendors and exhibitors. It’s a field trip worth taking.”



Above: Meade Co. ATC students, along with principal Faye Campbell, check out the Bosch Tools exhibit.



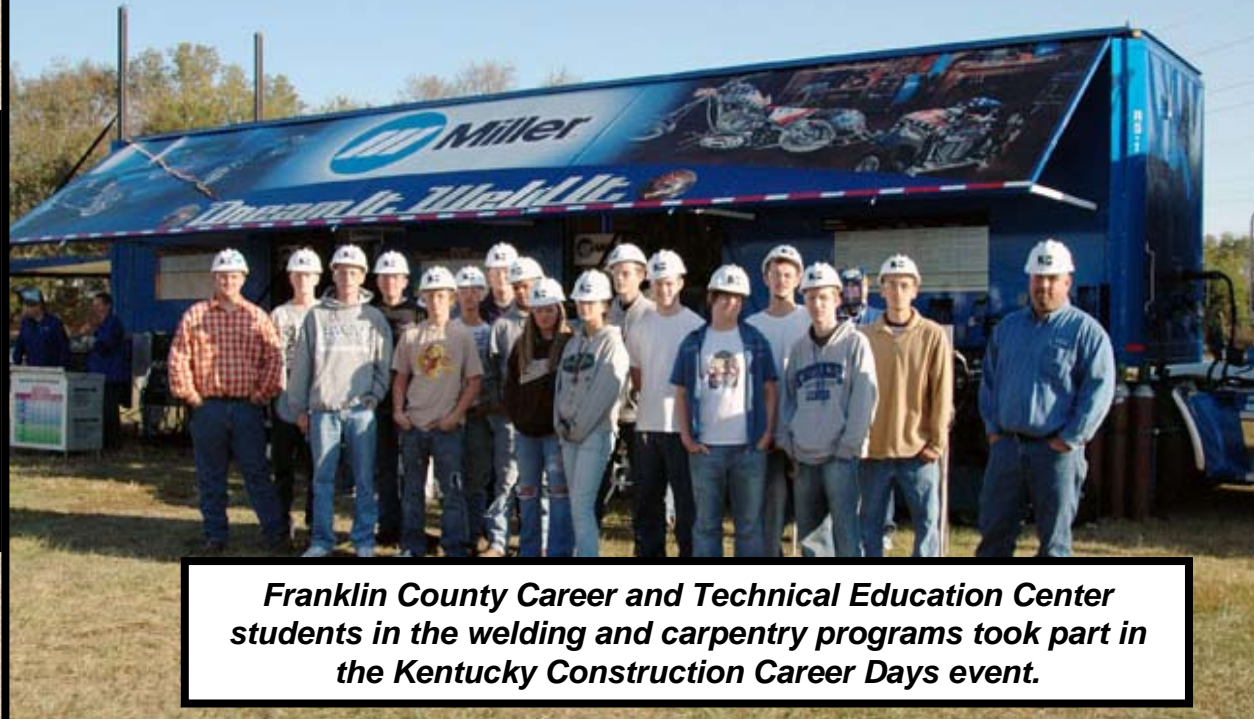
Above, second from right: Claude Gross, coordinator/instructor of the construction technology program at Bluegrass Community and Technical College (BCTC) – Leestown Campus, talks with Franklin Co. CTC welding instructor Randy Shewmaker, carpentry instructor J.W. Blackburn and a couple of their students about articulated pathways leading from secondary to postsecondary programs.

Shewmaker is a product of BCTC and encourages his students to explore a postsecondary option.

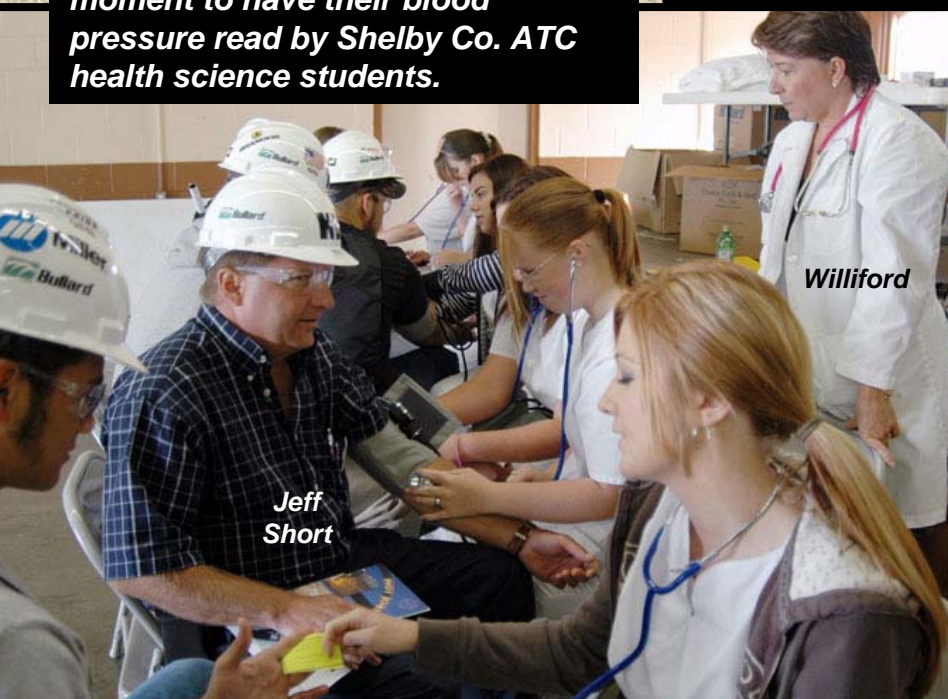


Photo (l to r): Education and Workforce Development Cabinet Legislative Liaison Laurent Rawlings and OCTE deputy executive director Mike Kindred enjoy the heavy equipment display presented by the Kentucky Equipment Distributors.

**Miller Welding Exhibit
and motorcycle.**



Below: Monroe Co. ATC wood technology instructor Jeff Short and some of his students take a moment to have their blood pressure read by Shelby Co. ATC health science students.



***Peggy Williford RN MSN
Health Science Instructor - Shelby Co. ATC:***

"Providing blood pressure screenings at the construction fair is an invaluable experience for our students. Not only do they become more competent at assessing blood pressure, but they gain so much confidence in themselves.

"Employers are looking for those 'soft skills' as well as clinical expertise. Participation in the screenings provides a great opportunity to enhance and further develop those soft skills. It improves their ability to communicate with their 'clients'. By the end of the day I see a huge difference in their ability to make eye contact, make casual yet professional conversation, and to view themselves as the professional young adults employers are seeking to employ."



At left: Arletta Adams, Letcher Co. ATC drafting student, takes part in a Nuts & Bolts Hand Skills competition sponsored by the Kentucky Equipment Distributors.

Third from left is OCTE academic consultant Todd Nickens monitors her progress.

“This is great and I’m glad we got to come,” says Adams. “It was a long trip, but worth the ride.”

At right (l to r): Barrett Sherrill, Milwaukee territory representative, watches as Millard ATC students Tyler Goins (carpentry) and Daniel Ratliff (industrial maintenance technology) try out some Milwaukee hand tools.

Sherrill:

“We appreciate being included in this event because it gives us an opportunity to introduce future trades people to Milwaukee tools.”







Good News Flash #256
By: Fran Dundon
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Education and Workforce Development Cabinet
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